

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the above-captioned patent application:

1. (Currently Amended) A pole for a hand pallet truck comprising:

a pole bar ~~which is~~ linked to a support for a steerable wheel at ~~its~~ a lower end and connected to a loop-shaped handle at ~~the other~~ an opposite end,

an operating device within [[the]] a space defined by the loop-shaped handle, ~~the~~ said operating device being attached to a holding extension projecting into the handle in prolongation of the pole bar, and ~~being~~ connectable to a lifting apparatus of the hand pallet truck via a first traction and/or and pushing element, and, ~~if applicable,~~ being connectable via a second traction and/or and pushing element to a brake of the hand pallet truck,

~~wherein~~ an a first operating lever [[is]] and a second operating lever respectively disposed on either side of the holding extension, ~~the~~ each of said first and second operating levers being pivotally mounted on the holding extension in a plane essentially defined by the handle,

~~characterized in that~~ wherein the operating device [[has]] includes a housing (20), in which first and second mounting places (50, 52) are disposed, one for each of said first and second operating ~~lever~~ levers, each of said first and second operating levers projecting through a slot (42, 44) in ~~the~~ a side of the housing (20) with an actuating portion, in that the first and second mounting places (50, 52) are identically constructed and preferably are symmetrically arranged symmetrically to the axis of the holding extension, ~~in that~~ a wherein said first operating lever (24) is mounted at the first mounting place (52) and optionally a one of said second [[or]] operating lever and a third operating lever (70, 22) is mountable mounted at the second mounting place (50), wherein and when said second operating lever is mounted at the second mounting place, the second operating lever (70) is adapted for connection connected with the second

traction ~~and/or and~~ pushing element (76) for the brake, in that the first and third operating levers (24, 22) are identically shaped identically and each have a coupling an inner portion each, in that a coupling mechanism connected to the first traction ~~and/or and~~ pushing element is disposed inside the housing (20), wherein the coupling mechanism is constantly engaging the coupling inner portion of the first operating lever (24) and ~~is able to engage~~ engages the coupling inner portion of the third operating lever (22) when [[it]] said third operating lever is mounted at the second mounting place, and wherein finally in that inside the housing (20) is provided a locking device for the second operating lever (70) is further provided in said housing, wherein [[the]] said locking device ~~may be~~ is actuated from a locking and unlocking lever (80) mounted at [[the]] a third mounting place (82) and extending to the same side as the one of said second [[or]] and third operating lever (70, 24) levers.

2. (Currently Amended) The pole of claim 1, wherein the first and third operating levers lever (24, 22) are coupled by the coupling mechanism such that pulling at least one of the first [[or]] and third operating lever (24, 22) ~~or both levers~~ out of a neutral position and away from the pole bar causes a lowering operation and pushing a single one of said first and third operating lever (24, 22) levers out of the neutral position towards the pole bar allows a lifting operation of the lifting apparatus.

3. (Currently Amended) The pole of claim 1, wherein an including a toothed interlock portion (86) having a toothing (88) is disposed in the housing (20) and a catch (92) ~~is cooperating for engaging with the toothing teeth of said interlock portion~~ such that when pulling the second operating lever (70), the catch (92) ratchets along the toothing (88) teeth of said interlock portion and, when the second operating lever (70) has finished moving, said lever engages one of the tooth spaces, ~~and the said locking and unlocking lever (80) is being coupled to the catch (92) to disengage [[it]] said catch from the toothing (88) teeth.~~

4. (Currently Amended) The pole of claim 3, wherein at least one of the catch ~~(92)~~ or and the locking and unlocking lever ~~(80)~~ is biased by a spring ~~(84)~~.

5. (Currently Amended) The pole of claim 3, wherein the catch ~~(92)~~ and the locking and unlocking lever ~~(80)~~ are each mounted ~~on a common shaft~~ on the second operating lever ~~(70)~~.

6. (Currently Amended) The pole of claim 1, wherein each of the first, second ~~and/or~~ and third operating levers ~~(24, 70, 22)~~ have the same geometric shape.

7. (Currently Amended) The pole of claim 1, wherein the actuating portion ~~(72)~~ of the second operating lever ~~(70)~~ is different than the actuating portions of the first and third operating levers, wherein said actuating portion of second operating lever has a different feature including at least one of being made from a different material, having and/or has a different surface and/or a different colour or has color and having a different shape than the first [[or]] and third operating levers ~~(24, 22)~~.

8. (Currently Amended) The pole of claim 1, wherein ~~the coupling mechanism is constructed such that [[an]] one of the operating lever (22, 24) levers remains in the neutral position when the other [[one]] of said operating levers is being pulled.~~

9. (Currently Amended) The pole according to ~~one of the~~ claim 8, wherein ~~the coupling mechanism is constructed such that when shifting the operating lever in levers between a pushing direction and back to the neutral position[,] moves the operating levers are moved synchronously.~~

10. (Currently Amended) The pole of claim 1, wherein the coupling mechanism includes a shifting element ~~(80)~~ which is linearly movable inside the housing ~~(20)~~ and has a tooth rack portion ~~(58)~~ with teeth a tooth ~~(64, 62)~~ on

opposing ~~side~~ sides and wherein the first and third operating levers (~~24, 22~~) each have a toothed portion for engaging with ~~one~~ teeth said teeth of the tooth rack portion ~~each~~.

11. (Currently Amended) The pole of claim 10, wherein [[the]] inner end portions (~~48, 74, 46~~) of the operating levers (~~24, 70, 22~~) cross each other inside the housing (~~20~~) and their mounting place places (~~48, 50~~) is are disposed on the respective opposite ~~side~~ sides of the shifting element (~~60~~).

12. (Currently Amended) The pole of claim 1, wherein the housing (~~20~~) is made up of two shells (~~32, 34~~), the dividing plane of which is disposed in or parallel to the pivotal plane of the operating levers (~~24, 70, 22~~).

13. (Currently Amended) The pole of claim 12, wherein each of the housing shells have has a socket portion which is capable of receiving a tube portion of the holding extension.

14. (Currently Amended) A pole for a hand pallet truck comprising:

a pole bar ~~which~~ is linked to a support for a steerable wheel at ~~its~~ a lower end and connected to a loop-shaped handle at ~~the other~~ an opposite end,

an operating device disposed within the space defined by ~~the~~ said loop-shaped handle, the operating device being attached to a holding extension projecting into the handle in prolongation of the pole bar,

~~wherein an~~ first and second operating lever ~~is~~ levers disposed on either side of the holding extension, ~~the~~ each of said operating levers being pivotally mounted on the holding extension in a plane essentially defined by the handle, wherein [[one]] said first operating lever acts on a traction or pushing element connectable to a lifting apparatus of the hand pallet truck and [[the]] said second operating lever acts on a second traction or pushing element connected to the brake of the hand pallet truck and a locking and/or unlocking lever pivotally

mounted inside the operating device which in a first position of the second operating lever locks ~~the same~~ said second operating lever and in a second position unlocks the second operating lever; and

~~characterized in that~~ a catch (92) is movably mounted on the second operating lever (70) inside the housing (20) for the operating device, ~~the~~ said catch cooperating with a ~~teeth~~ toothed interlock portion (86) in the housing (20) to lock the second operating lever (70) in given pivotal positions, in that the locking and unlocking lever is tiltably mounted inside the housing and coupled to the catch (92) and that at least one of the catch (92) ~~or~~ and the locking ~~and/or~~ and unlocking lever (80) ~~are~~ is biased by a spring (84).